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**SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM PERRY  
PRESS CONFERENCE AFTER MEETING WITH  
BOSNIAN FOREIGN MINISTER SILAJDZIC  
ZAGREB, CROATIA**

**22 JULY 1994**

Zagreb, July 22 -- U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry met with senior officials from the Croatian and Bosnian governments, and UNPROFOR during a one-day visit to Zagreb on Friday, July 22.

In a joint appearance with U.S. Ambassador to Croatia Peter W. Galbraith and Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic, Dr. Perry emphasized that despite not being able to visit Sarajevo, he had a "very good and substantive meeting" with Prime Minister Silajdzic in Zagreb, in which he sought the Prime Minister's views on steps which the foreign-ministers from the Contact Group should take at their upcoming July 30th meeting.

(unofficial transcript)

AMBASSADOR GALBRAITH: We have just concluded a meeting with leaders of the government of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Unfortunately, some elements sought to prevent Dr. Perry's trip to Sarajevo and the airport was closed. But it did not prevent the meeting between Secretary Perry and the Prime Minister of Bosnia-Herzegovina. They are here to answer your questions.

SECRETARY PERRY: I would like to make a brief opening comment. I was to be in Sarajevo to meet with the key officials in the Bosnian government. I was able to achieve a good bit of that objective by meeting with the Prime Minister this morning and afternoon. It was a very good and a very substantive meeting. We had a very cordial discussion of the causes of the present conflict in Bosnia. I have his and his government's assessment of what should be done to try to achieve a peace plan in the earliest possible conclusion. In particular, I sought their advice on what actions should be taken by the Foreign Ministers at the meeting on the 30th. That was really the dominant part of our discussion.

PRIME MINISTER SILAJDZIC: Thank you very much that I have the honor of meeting Secretary Perry again. The Bosnian Parliament has accepted the plan of the Contact Group, because the international community has set incentives for acceptance of the

PRIME MINISTER SILAJDZIC: Thank you very much that I have the honor of meeting Secretary Perry again. The Bosnian Parliament has accepted the plan of the Contact Group, because the international community has set incentives for acceptance of the plan and disincentives for rejection of the plan. Now, yesterday, we felt that there was some hesitation, on the part of the international community. That is why President Izetbegovic felt it was necessary to explain, once more, that any further concessions at the expense of Bosnia-Hercegovina will not be allowed. That would immediately mean the rejection of this plan. Since the Contact Group Ministers are going to meet on the 30th of July in Geneva, as it stands now, our "yes", our positive answer is still on the table. Thank you.

Q: Do you think that the Russians will fully support many sanctions or military options, Mr. Perry?

SEC. PERRY: I really wouldn't want to speculate on that. We will get the answer to that on the 30th. In the mean time, I hope that the Russians will continue to put pressure on the Serbs to accept the peace plan the way it was proposed.

PRIME MINISTER SILAJDZIC: I would take the opportunity to say one more thing. That is that we feel that a new stage should be turned now in relations between the countries in this region. We offer mutual recognition to all states on the territory of the former Yugoslavia. Meaning that our government is ready to recognize Serbia and Montenegro, if that step is accepted by the Belgrade regime. We also request, from the international community, to pay attention to control of the borders. We have what we have now in Bosnia and Croatia because the borders have been violated. Control of the borders is the key to peace.

Q: Mr. Silajdzic, I don't understand. President Izetbegovic said yesterday that the acceptance on your side has cease to be in effect. So, how can you say it is still valid?

PRIME MINISTER SILAJDZIC: Yes, it's still valid. That was a misinterpretation. He laid down two possibilities of the acceptance if the international community stays true to its commitments of incentives and disincentives. Of course, our "yes" is valid. It's on the table. It has not been withdrawn.

SEC. PERRY: I was very grateful to the Prime Minister in making this clarification. It's a very important statement and we welcome it.

Q: Mr. Prime Minister, is Bosnia-Hercegovina, in any way, ready to compromise with any changes with the plan, given the fact the Serbs say that they want small changes?

PRIME MINISTER SILAJDZIC: The answer is no. There was a deadline, the 19th. Yes or no. No buts and ifs. We took it seriously. It was a "take it or leave it." We take it.

15

Q: Come July 30th, what do you hope, should the Serbs not come around. What do you anticipate asking the Contact Group to do to push forward?

PRIME MINISTER SILAJDZIC: Well, they laid out their commitments and their agenda, which is intensifying the economic sanctions on Serbia and Montenegro, air support for air exclusion zones, and lifting of the arms embargo. Those three points. We always add control of borders as being a key to peace in the region.

Q: Mr. Perry, what about the Contact Group plan which included the possibility, or the right, of the Bosnian government to defend itself by lifting the embargo?

SEC. PERRY: That would be one of the three options being considered by the Foreign Ministers on the 30th. They've already announced that, if the Serbs did not accept the peace plan, it would be an option that would be open for consideration at that time.

PRIME MINISTER SILAJDZIC: If I may, let me add something here. We have genuinely hoped for them to say "yes." But, instead of that, what we have in Bosnia-Herzegovina is intensified ethnic cleansing from Banja Luka, Janja, Bjeljina, and Rogatica in these days, intensified fighting. By provoking fighting and our reprisals, they hope to be able to dilute this momentum. They hope for the international community to call us two sides and forget about this peace plan. I hope this will not happen this time.

Q: Do you see signs that the Contact Group, especially those with troops in UNPROFOR, are actually willing to take any of these measures, especially expanding air power or lifting the embargo?

SEC. PERRY: I have two answers to that. The first answer is that we won't know for sure what action is to be taken until the meeting on the 30th. The second answer, however, is that those were the conditions spelled out by the representatives of the Contact Group and, therefore, it is clear that those are the options that will be on the table that they're going to be considering on the 30th.

PRIME MINISTER SILAJDZIC: We have an experience with the commitment of the international community, not to mention the London Conference, at the highest possible levels and the result was zero. I can only hope that it is time now to act. That enough is enough. We must prevent spreading of this conflict of the war and aggression to other regions in the Balkans and wider. I hope that this time the international community will remain true to its commitments. Any other solution would mean a very serious loss of credibility and intensification of war and suffering in our region.

16